THE CONTEXT OF BHAKTI POETRY IN MEDIEVAL INDIA
Its Inception, Cultural Encounter And Impact
With Reference to the Work of Kabir and Nanak

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INDIA IN INDO-CARIBBEAN CANADIAN WRITING

THE CASE OF SASENARINE PERSAUD

"SUMMARY

OF

DOCTORAL RESEARCH DISSERTATION

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The argument of the Ph. D. research entitled “India in Indo-Canadian Caribbean Writing: The Case of Sasenarine Persaud” is presented in an outline as follows:

CHAPTER I.: THE INDO-CARIBBEAN PRESENCE IN CANADA.

The chapter presents a historical perspective on the twice-exiled Indo-Caribbeans in Canada that leads them to their present predicament. It focuses on their psychic conditions as expressed in the writings of Indo-Caribbean writers like Cyril Dabydeen, Neil Biscoondath, Sam Selvon, Arnold Harrichand Itwaru, Sasenarine Persaud, and others. It also attempts to derive an operative significance of the memory of India in the psyche and artistic sensibility of Indo-Caribbean expatriate writers. It views that their memory got formulated as a result of the Hindu samskaras that came down to them through their personal memory and the collective memory of the diaspora they belong to.

CHAPTER II. PERSAUD’S VIEWS ON “YOGIC REALISM”:

The chapter seeks first to explain the Indian world-view based on the concept of yoga as it emerges from the classics like Patanjali’s Yoga Sutram and the Bhagavad Gita. Based on these texts, an attempt is made to work out a concept of the Indian mind. The chapter then reviews Sasenarine Persaud’s life and vision that shape his literary aspiration and expression, particularly with the help of the essays in which he discusses these ideas. It, thus, provides a structure to carry out a review of Persaud’s works and his world-view. The chapter also explains Persaud’s theory of “Yogic Realism” to help further discussion on his literary works.

CHAPTER III: HINDU PERSONA IN DOUBLE EXILE:

The chapter traces cultural evolution of a Hindu (Indian) person in double exile in the four books of Persaud, first from “comfort” to “companionship” and then from “companionship”
to “confidence”, as defined in the previous chapter. This quest is of a prime concern among his protagonists who are in exile from their mother culture of India. While section I discusses two novels, Dear Death (1989) and The Ghost of Bellow’s Man (1992), section II examines Persaud’s stories in his collection, Canada Geese and Apple Chatney (1998).

CHAPTER IV: YOGIC REALISM: THE POETIC WAY

The chapter attempts to analyse Persaud’s poems in his collection, Damarary Telepathy (1989). The poems explain the poet’s choice to withdraw from the world in the west and to concentrate on telepathic links with Indian spiritualism. It inspires him, he says, to liberate his self and elevate it to realise the world of the yogic realism. It also discusses Persaud’s second book of poetry, The Wintering Kundalini (2002). The poems in this collection voice the poet’s regretful apprehension of the reality in Canada. The poet views that it hampers a person’s efforts for evolution of self by cooling down the kundalini, the centre of energy in his body with chilly cold, snow and glitter. An attempt is made to view these two realities as juxtaposing to each other to work adversely on a person’s mind. The poet views poetry as potent means to survive these depressing conditions and continue with efforts for evolution of self.

CHAPTER V: YOGIC REALISM – THE POETIC TRILOGY

The chapter discusses Persaud’s second book of poetry, A Surf of Sparrow’s Song (1996) with reference to his theory of ‘Yogic Realism” as explained in chapter II of the thesis. With the help of some poems, an attempt is made to take the reader on a metaphorical journey that one’s soul takes to reach the heights of the yogic realism as propounded by Persaud. It also attempts to analyse the poetic experimentation done by Persaud for evoking the experience. The chapter elaborates Persaud’s concepts of ‘writing as yoga’, his analogy of writing with
the Indian music and the ‘yogic realism’ as they operate in his poetry. It also discusses Persaud’s two other books of poetry, *The Hungry Sailor* (2000) and *A Writer Like* (2002). Persaud views the poems in these collections as poetic revelations of a writer’s yogic journey unfolding different layers of his three layered perception that began with his sentimental view of the world followed by his critical view of the world leading finally to his yogic view of the world. The goal of the journey is the image ‘a writer like you’ that he aspires to unite with. The journey is not over, yet vision is clear. Persaud’s poetic journey reaches a stage of understanding that he has to follow the vision in order to reach the ultimate goal that is the yoga, the union of the two, a writer-yogi and the ‘A Writer like You’. The chapter presents a reading of Persaud’s yogic journey through poetry in the light of the system of yoga as laid down in Patanjali’s *Yoga Sutram*. 